

Shorts Study Notes



Directed by: Robert Rodriguez

Certificate: PG

Running time: 89 mins

Synopsis

A young boy's discovery of a colourful, wish-granting rock causes chaos in the suburban town of Black Falls when jealous kids and scheming adults alike set out to get their hands on it.

Before seeing the film

Key questions

1. In 'Shorts', the main character, Toe Thompson finds a multi-coloured stone that can grant wishes. If you found an object that could make your wishes come true, what would you wish for?
2. 'Shorts' is made by the same director who made 'Spy Kids'. What kind of children's movie was Spy Kids? What do you think Shorts will be like given what you know about Spy Kids? How much influence do you think the film's director has on the film that we see at the cinema?
3. Toe Thompson and his family live in Black Falls, a town where most parents work for Black Box Industries, makers of a do-it-all gadget that is sweeping the nation. Design a gadget that would make your day easier – perhaps something to help you get to school on time, or to do your homework for you!
4. A mysterious 'Rainbow Rock' literally drops on Toe's head from the sky. He soon finds out that the rock has magic powers in that it can grant his wishes. Draw a picture showing what you think the Rainbow Rock looks like.
5. Why do you think the film is called 'Shorts' and not 'Magical Wishing Rock'. What does each title say about the story of the film? Which would you rather go and see? Why?

After seeing the film

Task 1

Some people say: '...be careful what you wish for, it just might come true.' Describe how you think this phrase could apply to 'Shorts'.

Task 2

'Shorts' is made up of five short stories, with each story connecting in some way. As a class, write stories about the children in your class. Read them out to each other and decide on the five best stories. Storyboard these stories and work out how you could make each story connect. Perhaps you could have the same characters in each story. Perhaps they will all be set in the same time and place. Work out how your five stories can work together as one big story. Think of a title and create a poster for your story as if it were going to be made into a film.